K167

A

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS,

SINCE THE FIRST OF AUGUST, 1834,

By JAMES WILLIAMS.

AN APPRENTICED LABOURER IN JAMAICA.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY JOHN HADDON,
Castle Street, Finsbury.
SOLD BY WILLIAM BALL,
ALDINE CHAMBERS, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

Price One Penny.

[1837]

[190]
nc[xp

RPJCB

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following narrative of James Williams has been carefully taken down from his lips. It was deemed better to preserve his own peculiar style, rather than by any attempt at revision, to endanger the self-evident proof of fidelity, which his account bears. I have now before me a document, signed by two free negroes and six apprentices, all members of a Christian church in Jamaica, in which they affirm, that they have known the narrator from his infancy, and that he "*is steady, sober, industrious, of good moral character, and that his word may be relied upon.*" Their names and the estates to which they belong, should be given, did I not know the consequences which would probably follow to themselves from the disclosure. The negro apprentice unhappily is not in a situation to give evidence against his master with impunity. He cannot tell his tale of woe without subjecting himself to the brutal wrath of his oppressor. James Williams, however, is in the land of freedom, and his narrative will speak for itself. It is a revolting picture which he draws—a dark assemblage of human crimes, unrelieved by a single virtue, save the enduring patience of

the sufferer. That heart must be callous and brutal, the deepest feelings of which are not stirred by his narrative, and that man must possess a very partial acquaintance with the Christian law of duty, who does not rise from its perusal determined to exert all his powers for the extinction of the system under which our African brethren groan and bleed. In the course of the investigations instituted on the spot by Mr. Sturge and his associate, confirmatory evidence of some of the most revolting of Williams's statements was obtained. The minutes of these examinations are before me; and were it consistent with a due regard to the interests of the witnesses, they should be presented to the reader. But I must content myself with affirming that they leave no doubt in my mind, and could leave no doubt in the mind of any impartial man, that, horrible as is the account which Williams gives, it is entitled to the full confidence of the British public.

THOMAS PRICE, D. D.,

Hackney, London.

June 20, 1837

NARRATIVE, &c.

I AM about eighteen years old. I was a slave belonging to Mr. Senior and his sister, and was brought up at the place where they live, called Penshurst, in Saint Ann's parish, in Jamaica.

I have been very ill treated by Mr. Senior and the magistrates since the new law come in. Apprentices get a great deal more punishment now than they did when they was slaves; the master take spite, and do all he can to hurt them before the free come;—I have heard my master say, "Those English devils say we to be free, but if we is to free, he will pretty well weaken we, before the six and the four years done; we shall be no use to ourselves afterwards."

Apprentices a great deal worse off for provision than beforetime; magistrate take away their day, and give to the property; massa give we no salt allowance, and no allowance at Christmas; since the new law begin, he only give them two mackerel,—that was one time when them going out to job.

When I was a slave I never flogged,—I sometimes was switched, but not badly; but since the new law begin, I have been flogged seven times, and put in the house of correction four times.

Soon after 1st August, massa tried to get me and many others punished; he brought us up before Dr. Palmer, but none of us been doing nothing wrong, and magistrate give we right.

After that, Mr. Senior sent me with letter to Captain Connor, to get punished, but magistrate send me back—he would not punish me, till he try me; when I carry letter back to massa, he surprise to see me come back, he been expect Captain Connor would put me in workhouse. Capt. Connor did not come to Penshurst; he left the parish. Massa did'nt tell me what charge he have against me.

When Dr. Thompson come to the parish, him call one Thursday, and said he would come back next Thursday, and hold court Friday morning. He come Thursday afternoon, and get dinner, and sleep at Penshurst, and after breakfast, all we apprentices called up. Massa try eight of we, and Dr. Thompson flog every one; there was five man, and three boys: them flog the boys with switches, but the men flog with the cat. One of the men was the old driver, Edward Lawrence; Massa say he did not make the people take in the pimento crop clean; he is quite old—head quite white—hav'nt got one black hair in it, but Dr. Thompson ordered him to be flogged; not one of the people been doing any thing wrong; all flog for trifling, foolish thing, just to please the massa.

When them try me, massa said, that one Friday I was going all round the house with big stone in my hand, looking for him and his sister, to knock them down. I was mending stone wall round the house by massa's order; I was only a half-grown boy that time. I told magistrate, I never do such thing, and offer to bring evidence about it; he refuse to hear me or my witness; would not let me speak; he sentence me to get 39 lashes; eight policemen was present, but magistrate make constable flog at first; them flog the old driver first, and me next; my back all cut up and cover with blood,—could not put on my shirt—but massa say, constable not flogging half hard enough, that my back not cut at all;—then the magistrate make one of the police take the cat to flog the other three men, and him flog most unmerciful. It was Henry James, Thomas Brown, and Adam Brown that the police flog. Henry James was an old African; he had been put to watch large corn-piece—no fence round it—so the cattle got in and eat some of the corn—he couldn't help it, but magistrate flog him for it. After the flogging, he got quite sick, and begin coughing blood; he went to the hot-house,* but got no attention, them say him not sick. He go to Capt. Dillon to complain about it; magistrate give him paper to carry to massa, to warn him to court on Thursday; that day them go to Brown's Town, Capt. Dillon and a new magistrate, Mr. Rawlinson, was there. Capt. Dillon say that him don't think Henry James was sick; he told him to go back, and come next Thursday, and he would have doctor to examine him; the old man said he did not know whether he should live till Thursday. He walk away, but before he get out of the town, he drop down dead—all the place cover with blood that he puke up. He was quite well before the flogging, and always said it was the flogging bring on the sickness.

Same day Henry James dead, Massa carry me and Adam Brown before magistrate; he said I did not turn out sheep till nine o'clock on Wednesday morning; I told magistrate the sheep was kept in to be dressed, and I was eating my breakfast before dressing them; but Capt. Dillon sentence me and Adam Brown to lock up in the

* Hospital.

dungeon at Knapdale for ten days and nights; place was cold and damp, and quite dark—a little bit of a cell, hardly big enough for me to lie full length; them give me a pint of water and two little cocoa or plantain a day;—hardly able to stand up when we come out, we was so weak; massa and misses said we no punish half enough; massa order we straight to our work, and refuse to let we go get something to eat.

The week after we let out of dungeon, Mr. Rawlinson come to Penshurst, and tell some of the people he not done with me yet about the sheep; we only put in dungeon for warning, and he would come back next Thursday, and try we again for it; he did come Thursday about four o'clock, and send call us; when we come, him and massa and misses was at dinner—we sent in say we come—them said, Never mind till morning. We know this magistrate come to punish we for nothing, so we go over to Capt. Dillon at Southampton to complain; he write paper next morning to police-station, and policeman take us home. Mr. Rawlinson gone already, and Misses said he left order that we to lock up every night, and keep at work in day-time, till he come back—but police say no, Capt. Dillon order that we not to punish till he try we himself on Thursday, at Brown's Town;—Them took us there, but Capt. Dillon did not come, but send paper for the other magistrate to try it, and said them couldn't try us for the same thing again. Mr. Rawlinson said it was not the same thing; Mr. Senior said, No, we had been insolent to him; we call constable to give evidence, and he said we not insolent; Then magistrate say to Mr. Senior, "You mean insolence by manner." Massa answer, "Yes, that is what I mean, insolence by manner." It was magistrate self that put massa up to say this;—Then the magistrate sentence us to get twenty lashes apiece, which was given in front of court-house by police; the punishment was very severe—both of us fainted after it—we lie down on the ground for an hour after it, not able to move; A free man in the place sent some rum and camphor to bring we round. We went home that night, and went into hospital—them would hardly receive us, we stop there that night and Friday, lock up all day and night, and no feeding; Saturday morning massa turned both of us out—we back all sore, quite raw, and we not able to stoop.

Ten days after the flogging at Brown's Town, Mr. Rawlinson come again to Penshurst on the Monday, and slept there. Next morning massa brought me up, and said that after the last punishment, when we got home, I did not turn out the horses and cows that night. I told magistrate I was sick with the flogging, and went to the hot-house, but Mr. Rawlinson order me twenty-five lashes for it; Mr. Senior said, Let it be done on the place;—magistrate said yes, and ordered constable, William Dalling, to do it. I begged magistrate not to flog me again, as the other flogging not well yet, but no use, he wouldn't hear me, but rode away from the place. Massa said he have no Cat, but he would find some

switches to do it with; I was flogged with lancewood switches upon the old flogging—it tear off all the old scabs, and I not able to lie down on my back for two or three week after—was made to work with my back all sore.

About a month after the last flogging, massa said to me one day, that he would send for magistrate, and oblige him to do his duty, that all the gates in the pasture was down, and I never told him, and that I took up too much time to get in two turn of food for the horses; I said I couldn't do more than I was doing, I had too many things to do—first thing in the morning I had to blow shell, then to go to pasture and get in milking cow, and to milk them—then had to look over the sheep and cows, and all the stock, and to dress them that have sores—then to get them altogether, and give to one little boy to take them to pasture; at nine o'clock go to breakfast for half an hour, then have to go mend gaps in the stone wall, after that have to take two asses and a bill, to cut bread-nut fruit for the horses—had to climb the high trees to cut the bread-nut—then to chop it up, and load the two asses and take it home, and to come back for another load:—This finish between four and five, and by that time the little boy bring in all the cattle. I have to look over them and to turn them into different pastures, then have to go and get a bundle of wood for a watch-fire, and after that to supper the horses in the stable at night; they don't allow me to go to negro-houses—obliged to keep watch all night, sleeping in the kitchen, and to answer all call; Massa said I was only four years apprentice, and don't entitle to any time—that only one day in a fortnight due to me to work my ground and feed myself.

Massa never give me food; he allow me every other Sunday to work my ground, and sometimes he let me change it for another day Magistrate say that was all the time the law allow.

As to the gates being down, massa go through them every day himself and see it; but he say I ought to have told him, and he will make magistrate punish me for it, him swear vengeance against me.

Mr. Rawlinson come on a Friday evening, and I was to have take next day for my day; but massa send me word that me not take the day, as he want to bring me before the magistrate; I was frightened and didn't go next morning: Then I heard that magistrate said as I take the day against orders, when him and me meet he would settle it: I was quite frightened when I hear this, and I go away to Spanish Town to see the governor—but didn't see him, as he was up in the mountain: I go back to St. Ann's, and hide in the woods about Penshurst and Knapsdale; I stop about seven weeks, and then go back to Spanish Town; I went to Mr. Ramsay, and he gave me paper to Mr. Emery, the captain of police, at St. Ann's—I met him on the road—he took me and put me in dungeon at Carlton—was kept there from Wednesday till Friday morning, then policemen came and took me to Brown's Town, and put me in cage till next day; then Mr. Rawlinson had me handcuffed and

sent me to Penshurst, and put me in dungeon ten days before he try me.

On the eleventh day Mr. Rawlinson came and slept there that night; next morning he had me brought out, and asked me about the running away, and I told him I go away because I was frightened when I hear how him and massa threaten me; then he sentence me to St. Ann's Bay workhouse, for nine days, to get fifteen lashes in going in—to dance the treadmill morning and evening, and work in the penal gang: and after I come back from the punishment, I must lock up every night in dungeon till he visit the property again, and I have to pay fifty days out of my own time for the time I been runaway.

Then they handcuff me to a woman belonging to Little-field, to send to the workhouse; she have a little child carrying on her back and basket on her head, and when she want to give pickaniny suck, she obliged to rest it on one hand to keep it to the breast, and keep walking on; police don't stop to make her suckle the child. When we get to the workhouse, that same evening they give me the fifteen lashes; the flogging was quite severe, and cut my back badly; Then they put collar and chain upon my neck, and chain me to another man. Next morning they put me on the treadmill along with the others: At first, not knowing how to dance it, I cut all my shin with the steps; they did not flog me then—the driver show me how to step, and I catch the step by next day; But them flog all the rest that could not step the mill, flogged them most dreadful. There was one old woman with grey head, belonging to Mr. Wallace, of Farm, and she could not dance the mill at all: she hang by the two wrists which was strapped to the bar, and the driver kept on flogging her;—she get more than all the rest, her clothes cut off with the Cat—the shoulder strap cut with it, and her shift hang down over that side—then they flog upon that shoulder and cut it up very bad; but all the flogging couldn't make she dance the mill, and when she come down all her back covered with blood. They keep on putting her on the mill for a week, and flog her every time, but when they see she could not dance it, they stop putting her on; if they no been stop, they would have kill her.

There was about thirty people in the workhouse that time, mostly men; nearly all have to dance the tread-mill morning and evening; six or eight on the tread-mill one time, and when them done, another spell go on, till them all done; every one strap to bar over head, by the two wrists, quite tight; and if the people not able to catch the step, then hang by the two wrist, and the mill-steps keep on batter their legs and knees, and the driver with the cat keep on flog them all the time till them catch the step. The women was obliged to tie up their clothes, to keep them from tread upon them, while they dance the mill; them have to tie them up so as only to reach down to the knee, and half expose themself; and the man have to roll up their trowsers above the knee, then

the driver can flog their legs with the cat, if them don't dance good; and when they flog the legs till they all cut up, them turn to the back and flog away; but if the person not able to dance yet, them stop the mill, and make him drop his shirt from one shoulder, so as to get at his bare back with the cat. The boatswain flog the people as hard as he can lay it on—man and woman all alike.

One day, while I was in, two young woman was sent in from Moneague side, to dance the mill, and put in dungeon, but not to work in penal gang; them don't know how to dance the mill, and driver flog them very hard; they didn't tie up their clothes high enough, so their foot catch upon the clothes when them tread the mill, and tear them;—and then between the Cat and the Mill—them flog them so severe,—they cut away most of their clothes, and left them in a manner naked; and the driver was bragging afterwards that he see all their nakedness.

Dancing tread-mill is very hard work, it knock the people up—the sweat run all down from them—the steps all wash up with the sweat that drop from the people, just the same as if you throw water on the steps.

One boatswain have to regulate the pole* of the mill, and make it go fast or slow, as him like; sometimes them make it go very fast, and then the people can't catch the step at all—then the other boatswain flogging away and cutting the people's legs and backs without mercy. The people bawl and cry so dreadful, you could hear them a mile off; the same going on every time the mill is about; driver keep the Cat always going while the people can't step.

When they come off the mill, you see all their foot cut up behind with the Cat, and all the skin bruise off the shin with the mill-steps, and them have to go down to the sea-side to wash away the blood.

After all done dance the mill, them put chain and collar on again, and chain two, three, and sometime four together, and turn we out to work penal gang—send us to different estate to work—to dig cane-hole, make fence, clean pasture, and dig up heavy roots, and sometimes to drag cart to bring big stone from mountain side, about two or three miles from the bay; have to drag cart up steep hill. About ten o'clock they give we breakfast,—one quart of corn boiled up with a little salt; sometime they give we a shad between two or three of we.

They keep us at work till between four and five o'clock, then take us back to the workhouse—take the chains off we all, and make us go upon the mill again, same fashion as in the morning. After that them put us into the bar-room—put the chain and collar on again, and our foot in the shackle-bar, to sleep so till morning. All the woman put into one room, and all the man in another;—them that have any of the breakfast left from morning, them eat it

* The lever.

after lock up, but them that eat all the allowance at breakfast, must starve till morning.

We keep on so every day till Sunday. Sunday the women sent to Mr. Drake's yard,* to clean it—and half the man go cut grass for his horses, and the other half carry water for the workhouse. After that they have to grind all the hoes, and the bills, and the axes, ready for Monday. Them work we all with chains on, on Sunday, but they don't put us on tread-mill that day.

When the nine days done, them send me home; I so weak I hardly able to reach home; when I get there, Mr. Senior put me in the dungeon, and keep me there for four days and nights; he give me four little bananas and a piece of pumpkin with a little dry salt, and a pint of water. Magistrate didn't order me to be locked up in the day, only at night, but massa do it of his own will.

Then I begg'd massa to let me out, and I would do whatever I can to please him, and he do so, and order me to get bundle of wood and keep watch every night, instead of going to the dungeon.

After coming out of workhouse I never feel well, and about three weeks after, I got quite sick with fever and head-ache, and pain in the stomach; almost dead with the sickness. Massa told me one day, another punishment like that, and it will just do for me—it would kill me quite. Dr. Tucker pay good attention to me, and at last I get over it.

After this, it was long time before they punish me again, but they make me pay off the fifty days; them give me no Sunday at all; every Wednesday they give me half a day to work my grounds, the other half them take to pay off the fifty days;—For one year and three months, them keep on take the half day from me every week, and never give me any feeding.

In November, about five or six weeks before this last Christmas, one Friday, massa blow shell at nine o'clock for the gang to go to breakfast; it was the time them begin to get half Friday;—Them say no, they would rather work the four hours and a half one time, and then get the rest of the day. Joseph Lawrence, the constable, go to massa, and said the people would not go to breakfast, they wanted to work out the time at once. Massa said no, he would make them go to breakfast, and then work them till one o'clock. He ordered Lawrence to go away from the gang, and sent head constable, William Dalling, to order the people to breakfast; they said no, they would not; then massa go and order them himself, but they refused to go—then there was a great row and noise, and massa make them take up Joseph Lawrence the constable, and Thomas Brown; he say it must be them advise the people not to go to breakfast, and he put them in the dungeon—and he take William Mills and put in, because he don't go to breakfast, and Miss Senior call out for them to put in Benjamin Higgins, the old mason, for the same thing.

* Mr. Drake is supervisor of the house of correction at St. Ann's Bay.

While Massa was putting the people in the dungeon, I was passing from the pantry to the kitchen; Miss Senior was cursing at me, but I did not give any hearing to what she saying. Massa was standing near the kitchen—he ask me what I got to say about it; I say, Sir, I have nothing to do with it, I don't interfere; he say, You do interfere; I tell him no—he raise up his stick three times to lick me down. I said, you can't lick me down, Sir, the law does not allow that, and I will go complain to magistrate if you strike me. He answer, he don't care for magistrate, he will lick the five pounds out of me that the magistrate will fine him:—Then he order me to be lock up along with the rest.

While they was putting me in, I said, "*It wasn't a man made this world, and man can't command it: the one that make the world will come again to receive it, and that is Jesus Christ!*" Massa called to William Dalling, the constable, to bear witness what I was saying; he said he heard it, then they lock me up, and keep us there for twenty-four hours.

That same time massa sent for Mr. Rawlinson, he come Monday morning: four of us was tried, but he let off one and punish the other three. Massa tell the magistrates about the words I use—him tell the very words; magistrate ask me if I use them words? I tell him yes, but I wasn't mean any thing harm. Then him put constable on his oath, and he repeat the words I said; then Mr. Rawlinson told me I had no business to say so, and he sentence me to get twenty lashes in the workhouse, and to dance the treadmill morning and evening, and work in penal gang for seven days.

At same time him try Joseph Lawrence and his sister Amelia Lawrence. Massa said that on the Friday morning when he ordered Joseph Lawrence to go away from the gang, he disobeyed his order, and stopped at the gate. Mr. Rawlinson sentence him to get twenty lashes, and seven days in the workhouse, treadmill, and penal gang same as me, and he broke him from being constable, though he only swear him in for constable the Wednesday before.

When Amelia Lawrence was tried, massa said that every time he go to the field, he always find she at the first row, and he want to know what let she always take the first row—being her brother was the driver, seem as if she want to take the lead. Amelia said massa ought to glad to see apprentice working at the first row, and doing good work. This was all the word that massa have to say against Amelia Lawrence, and Mr. Rawlinson sentence her to seven days in the workhouse, penal gang, and treadmill.

Amelia have four pickninys, two free and two apprentice, she left them with her family to take care of while she in the workhouse. Them put us all three together into dungeon after the court done, and send for police to carry we to workhouse. We kept in dungeon till next morning. Them don't give we a morsel to eat, and not a so so drop of water; but one of our friends, unknowing to massa, put a little victuals through a small hole.

In the morning three police take us out, and carry us down to the workhouse; them handcuff me and Joseph Lawrence together, and when we get there them take the handcuff off, and tie we up one after the other, and give we twenty lashes apiece: both of we very much cut up with the flogging. When the penal gang come back in the evening, them put us all on treadmill—after my back cut up that fashion, all over blood, it hurt me dreadful to dance the mill.

The workhouse was quite full this time, they hardly have enough collar and chain to put on all the people, they obliged to take off the collar and chain from some of the life people,* to put on the apprentice; and at night there wasn't enough shackle to fasten all the people, and hardly room enough for us all to lie down. There was a great many woman in the workhouse, and several have sucking child; and there was one woman quite big with child, and them make her dance the mill too morning and evening: she not able to dance good, and them flog her; she complain about her stomach hurt her, and I see her several time go and beg the overseer not to work her on the mill, but him say, not him send her there, and he must do his duty.

All the woman that not able to dance was flog most dreadful, in particular all the woman from Hiattsfield. There was twenty-one woman from Hiattsfield, and one man—several of them have young children; I think they was in for fourteen days. I found them in when I got there, and they was let out on Saturday night; I was present when they let out, and I hear the list call, and counted the people, and it was twenty-one woman from Hiattsfield.

When I go to the workhouse on the Tuesday, there was only three of these woman able to work in the field, all the rest was in the hospital, from being cut up with the mill and the flogging; them all look quite shocking when them let out, some hardly able to walk to go home, the most lively among them was all mashed up with the mill, all the skin bruised off her shin; she had a young child too: she tell me that she was put in workhouse three weeks before, and now them send her back again.

There was more than a hundred people in the workhouse this time—I reckon the life people and all; there was about seventeen or eighteen of them, and when penal gang turn out, them send ten or twelve of the life people along with apprentice, and all have to work together. The life people better treated more than apprentice; them get better feeding, them have quart of flour every second day instead of corn, and always get shad or salt fish every day; they don't put life people on treadmill, and I never see them put a lick upon one of the life people.

Almost every apprentice that sent to workhouse by magistrate, have to dance treadmill, except the sick in the hospital. It was miserable to see when the mill going, the people bawling and cry-

* *Convicts* for life.

ing most dreadful—so they can't dance, so the driver keep on flogging; them holla out, "massa me no able! my 'tomach, oh! me da dead, oh!"—but no use, the driver never stop—the bawling make it rather worse, them make the mill go faster—the more you holla the more the mill go, and the driver keep on flogging away at all them not able to keep up; them flog the people as if them was flogging Cow.

One day one of the woman from Hiattsfield fainted on the mill; they been flogging at her, and the mill bruise all her shins; when she faint she drop off the mill, and look as if she dead; all her fellow apprentice set up crying, and ask if she going to dead left them; she not able to speak—two men carry her out into the yard, and lay her out upon the ground, and throw water upon her to bring her to; but for a long time them think she dead already; she didn't come to till next morning.

There was one old woman, name Sally, from Mr. Cohen's at Cool Shade, was in workhouse when I go there, and she stop in there long time; she was in shocking condition—they had been putting her on the mill, and she don't able to dance at all, and them been flog her most terrible, but still she not able to dance, and at last them obliged to leave off putting her on the mill: but them keep on make her go out to work in penal gang, and chain her to one of the strong woman; She was badly treated more than any body I ever see in the workhouse; every day them flog her, she hardly able to stand. Two of the drivers, James Thomas, and Robert Lyne, make constant practice to flog this old woman, and Mr. Drake sometimes beat her himself with supple jack.

One day we was working at Bank's negro-houses, cutting Penguin to plant at Springfield—old Sally was chained to a young girl name Mary Murry; it was heavy rain time; driver was pushing the people on to run fast—was flogging them on, the young girl was trying to get on, and was hauling and dragging the chain that was on him and Sally neck, as Sally don't able to keep up; at last the old woman fall down, right in a place where a stream of water was running through a negro-house street, and she don't able to get up again, then the driver stand over her with the cat, and flog her, but she not able to get up with the chain on, so he take off the chain and make the young girl tie it round her body,and go along with the rest; then he stand over the old woman, and flog her with the cat till he make her get up, and keep on flogging at her till she get to the cook's fireside; the old creature stand there trembling, all wet up—for two or three hours she not able to move away, she look quite stupid; all the other people in the workhouse quite pity this poor old woman, it would make any body heart grieve to see her. The under-driver tell the head-driver one day, that if him keep on beat her so, some of these days she will dead under it, and then he will get into trouble; every day I was in the workhouse, except to Sunday, I see them beat this old woman, and I left her still in.

All the drivers and the boatswains in the yard, is people that sen-

tence to the workhouse for life, two of them was very bad, them don't care how much them punish the apprentice.

Them woman that have young sucking child, have to tie them on their back, and go to the field chain two together; when it rain ever so hard they have to keep on work with the children tied on their backs, but when the weather dry, them put down the child at the fireside; when Mr. Drake there, he don't allow them to suckle the child at all, if it cry ever so much; him say the children free, and the law don't allow no time to take care of them; it is only the good will of the driver that ever let woman suckle the children.

The drivers constant try to get after the young women that put into the workhouse,—even them that married, no matter; before day in the morning, when the driver open the door to take the people out of the shackles, he call for any one he want, to come to his room, and many of them worthless ones do it; Amelia Lawrence complain to her brother and me, that never one morning pass without the driver after her—she don't know what to do, she quite hurt and dishearted about it—but she did not give way; I heard him myself one morning calling her to come.

One day, Mr. Hilton, who is clerk in the Court-House,* come to the workhouse soon in the morning, while the treadmill was going. I been on already, but another spell was on, and Mr. Hilton take off one of the weights from the pole, and make the mill go faster; after him gone, some of the people tell me that in the afternoon he often come half-drunk, while the mill is going, then him take off the weight, and take off the man from the pole, and let the mill go flying round: When the pole let loose so, no person can step the mill—them all throw off, and hang by them two wrist, then him take the Cat in his own hand, and flog all the people with all his strength.

Them say that sometimes he drive out with his wife, and come round by the workhouse, and if the mill going, he will leave his wife in the gig, and go in to punish the people, and all the call his wife can call to him to leave off, no use.

On the Wednesday next week, they let us out,—we been sent for seven days, but they don't reckon the Sunday for one day; we reach home Thursday—I was quite weak with the flogging and the tread-mill, and the hard work in the penal gang; had a terrible pain in my stomach—hardly able to walk up hill; all the people that been flogged always complain of pain in the stomach.

The day after I come out of the workhouse, massa order me to go get bread-nut food for the horse. I said I was not able to climb tree; I was sick, and my shoulders was quite sore, and I could hardly use it, and I tell massa that this make six time that they flog me. He answer, he will make it ten times too, and if I sick, I must die. Every day he keep on order me to go for the

* Deputy Clerk of the Peace, perhaps.

bread-nut, but I was not able, and massa threaten me sorely—him tell me, that if I don't make an end of him, he will make an end of me.

On the Thursday next week, he told me he would take me to magistrate next day, and he swear very vengeance against me. I get frightened, and on Friday morning I go away to complain to the governor. When I get to Byndloss late at night, the overseer, Mr. Allen, meet me, and take me up, and put me in confinement till next morning, then he put me in charge of two constables, who carry me to police station, and the captain, Mr. Mackaw, put handcuffs on me, and sent me to the special magistrate at Linstead, and he put me in the workhouse, till massa should send for me; them chain me to another man, and make me work with the penal gang.

On Thursday, William Dalling, the constable, came for me, and them deliver me up to him. We set out, and walk most of the night—get to Walton school, and slept there; in the morning we start again, and reach home abut twelve o'clock at night. On Saturday morning, William Dalling take me down to massa, and he send me on to Brown's Town; when the magistrate come, he shook his head at me, and said, Are you here again? Then they hold court. Massa said he ordered me to cut bread-nut, and I would not do it: me disobeyed his order, and on Friday went away, and he did not see me again till this morning. I told magistrate that I did not cut bread-nut, because I was quite sick with my stomach, and massa threaten my life so hard, that make me go away to complain to the governor. Then the magistrate called the sergeant of police, and tell him, Lay hold of that fellow, and give him five-and-twenty good lashes—and after the flogging I must be sent to workhouse again for *seven* days, and after I come out of the workhouse, I might go to the governor or whoever I like to complain. I told him the old flogging is not well yet, but he would not listen to me; They take me into the market-place, and tie me up to a tree, and give me the twenty-five lashes; all the people surprise to see them flogging me again, when the old one not well. The flogging was very severe; after it was done, I lay down before the door of the court-house, rain came on, and the police came and told me to go inside. I went in to where the court was sitting, and I said to Mr. Rawlinson, You don't do justice betwixt I and master. He tell me, that constable swear that I run away without a cause. I ask the constable, and he declare he never say any further than he took me out of Rodney Hall workhouse. Then Mr. Rawlinson say I have been before him eight or nine times already; I say, if I have been twenty times before you, you ought to do justice 'twixt I and massa. He said, He do justice. I told him, You don't do justice. Then he said, If you say another word, I will put you out in the rain; then he made police take and handcuff me, to carry to workhouse. While I was standing outside the door, I hear massa say to Mr. Rawlinson,

he had better let me stop in the workhouse for fourteen days; magistrate answer, That will make it till after new-year's-day; and then he said Yes.

The policeman carry me to St. Ann's Bay, but night catch me in the pass, and police take me into Cardiff Hall, and we sleep there that night; next morning, Sunday, he take me on to workhouse, and I had to dance tread-mill and work penal gang like before.

The workhouse was nearly full like the last time, but most of them was different people—some that I left in I find still there; there was plenty of woman there, but only one have young child, that was Elizabeth Mason, from Mount Campbell, she was in for seven days to dance the tread-mill; she not able to dance good; after she been on little time, she miss step and drop, and hang by her two wrists, then the boatswain flog her with the Cat, as hard as he could put it,—then she try to fetch up and catch the step, but fall again, and them keep on flog, and when they tire of flogging then they let her alone, and let the mill go on mashing her legs; all the skin was bruise of her shins, and her legs cut up with the Cat.

There was one young mulatto girl in for about ten days; she was name Margaret, and belong to Mr. Chrystie, the saddler, on the Bay; she complain of her stomach, and not able to dance the mill well; they flog her severe, and all her leg bruise with the mill; one evening her master come to the workhouse, when she was on the mill—he beg the boatswain to let the mill go fast, and flog Margaret well, and make her feel it so that she will keep away from it after.

There was another woman from Drax Hall on the mill—she didn't dance good, and they flog her very much, and when she find the flogging come too hard, she call out, "Massa, me no one flesh, me two flesh;" she was in family way, but the overseer said he didn't care, it wasn't him give her belly, and after that they was harder upon her.

On Christmas day them make me and five other men go cut grass for Mr. Drake's horses, and some of the woman go clean his yard and carry water.

As magistrate been sentence me only for seven day, I ask the overseer on the Sunday if my time no up? He look at the book and say it was put down for fourteen day, so them keep me in till Tuesday night after New Year's day, that make two weeks and a half, for they don't count the Sunday.

There was one girl, named Mary Murray, in the workhouse same time as me, from Seville; she tell me not the magistrate write the paper for she to come to the workhouse—the busha write it, and show it to magistrate, and him say it was all right; she tell we all, that what make them send her to workhouse was, that busha say the gang didn't turn out soon in the morning, and when the magistrate, Major Light, come, he send for the gang from the field, but them all frighten and run and hide—only she Mary Murray didn't

run, and them take she before the magistrate, and send her straight off to the workhouse. All the people that speak to me, complain very bad about Major Light; them say him always drunk;—I see him drunk myself many times, going about the properties,—sometimes I see his servant obliged to hold him in the chaise, he was so drunk; him name is quite common for drunkard through the parish; them tell me that where him sleep, him put the room in such condition that they were obliged to clean it all out next morning.

When he go upon the estate he call to the overseer, Have you got any thing for me to do,—any person to flog? and if they tell him yes, then him stop, and if they give him rum to drink, he will do whatever thing them want him.

One day when I was working in penal gang, I saw six or seven of the Windsor apprentices, was going to the workhouse to be flogged—it was Major Light sent them.

Another day I meet Major Light and the New Ground bookkeeper coming down to the bay, and six men, handcuffed, and tied with rope, was following after, with two constable in charge of them; they was carried down to workhouse and flogged, and then sent back. Every body say them never see crueller man than Major Light—him in a manner begging the overseer to let him punish the people. Mr. Sowley was a king to Major Light.

The tread-mill at St. Ann's bay, mash the people up quite dreadful; I see two woman at Knapdale, one named Nancy, married to Jarvis Webb, the other name Bessy, married to Philip Osborne; them been sent to dance treadmill, and when them come back, all their legs bruise up, and make bad sore. I see them with bandage round their legs, and obliged to walk with stick; but the overseer and master no care for the work, or the time them lose, if them can only get the people well punish. Massa tell me to my face that he could do without me very well, if he could get me in the workhouse for six months.

One day Miss Senior say to me and some other apprentices, that Mr. Clarke, the busha at Knapdale, tell her that him send two woman to the tread-mill, and then come back so well hackled, that them not able to do nothing for three or four months, and she don't know what the devil in we, that we not well mashed up, when we come back from the tread-mill.

Mary Ann Bell, a mulatto girl, one of Miss Senior's house servants, was quite large in the family way; Mr. Rawlinson sent her to dance the tread-mill, and when she come back she quite sick, and them strap her hand so tight upon the mill that she partly lost the use of her right hand ever since; she can't hold nothing heavy in that hand.

One day when I was at home in the pastures, close the public road, I see policeman carrying down an old man and a woman handcuffed together; the man was very old, he look more than sixty years old—he was all trembling, and hardly able to walk. I beg the police to stop and let me give them some orange; he do so,

and the woman tell me that them sending her to the workhouse about her not delivering her free child to the overseer to let it work. I hear that many people begin to talk that the free child no have no right to stop on the property, and they will turn them off if the mothers don't consent to let them work; this woman come from Orange Valley, but I don't know any thing more about her story.

The old man tell me that Mr. Rawlinson send him down to gaol, but him don't say what for; but about two months after I see him coming back from St. Ann's Bay. It was between Penshurst and Hinton Hill: him hardly able to crawl, his legs and back hackle most dreadful, and all his shirt and trowsers soak up with blood; I look at his right shoulder, and it was all in one sore, in a manner rotten up, with the flogging; I don't think him could live to reach home; he tell me he was two weeks coming from St. Ann's Bay (16 miles), obliged to beg victuals and shelter any place he come to. It was Mr. Rawlinson send him to gaol, and after been there for a little time, them take him out and carry him before Mr. Sowley, and him put the old man in the workhouse.

Some of them magistrate don't care what them do to apprentice, as long as them can get good eating and drinking with the massa, and busha, and sometimes them set the massa on to do worse than them want. All the apprentice say that Major Light make it constant rule to do so, and myself see Mr. Rawlinson do so one time—it was the very morning them flog me with the lancewood switches; after the court over, Mr. Rawlinson order his mule ready to go away, and him and massa and Miss Senior was standing at the door; Misses was wanting something, and she called Nanny Dalling, when Nanny come, her face "tie up" *(i. e. looked sour or displeased)*—I believe she been have some dispute with her fellow servant outside; Mr. Rawlinson say she look sulky and insolent, and him lay hold of her with him own hand, and haul her along to the dungeon, and push her in and lock the door; he left her child, a sucking baby, outside.

I was standing by the gate and see it all, and when Mr. Rawlinson mount his mule to go to Hinton Hill, I hear him say to massa, You must try to get up some good charge against that woman, and let me send her to the workhouse for about a fortnight; but massa answer that she have young child. The magistrate answer, That's no consequence; but massa didn't like to send her there. Mr. Rawlinson call again at Penshurst same day, as he coming back from Hinton Hill, and he make them bring Nanny Dalling out of the dungeon, and then he sentence her to be locked up in the dungeon for fourteen nights; and them did lock her up every night along with her young pickniny.

As I tell about other things, I want to tell about one time I do something bad; it was when massa get up a barrel of pork last year, in April; John Lawrence tell me he know where the pork was put, and he would help them with a part of it; two or three nights after they open the barrel, John Lawrence get a long stick

and tie a fork at the end of it, and then he go to the store window and stick the fork into the pork barrel, and get a piece of the meat and draw it to the window, but it couldn't come through the bars, so he come to the kitchen where I was sleeping, and he call me to come and help him; I go with him, and I hold the piece of pork while him cut it in two, and take and boil one half and give me some, and I eat it.

Misses and massa found out that the pork gone, and make noise about it, and accuse all the house servant about it; I can't bear to hear them accuse for wrongful, and I know who did it, so I tell William Dalling the constable that I know all about the pork. Then him tell massa, and they call me up and I tell the truth, that John Lawrence tief the pork and I help him to cut it, and I eat some of it; them carry we before a magistrate about it, and I tell Mr. Rawlinson the same thing, and John Lawrence confess it, and magistrate sentence John Lawrence and me to pay ten shillings a piece to massa for the pork; I borrow the money from my father and another man, and pay it to misses. This is one bad action I do, them don't punish me for it.

It was the Tuesday evening after new year's day that they let me out of the workhouse, and I reach home next day. Miss Senior say them been looking out for me since last week, as I only sentence for seven days, and she think say, that I run away and go back to Rodney Hall again. She make pretence she don't know that magistrate alter it to fourteen days, and massa pretend the same, for him send William Dalling the constable to the magistrate the week before to say I don't come home yet, and him suppose me run away, but massa know very well that I was in the workhouse all the time.

Mr. Rawlinson self pretend him don't know I was in the workhouse so long, him say so to make William Dalling fool, because him was present when Mr. Rawlinson try me, and hear him sentence me to no more than seven days in the workhouse. Them don't know that I hear them make the bargain to keep me in all Christmas week.

Next time Mr. Rawlinson come to Penshurst massa try to get me punish again. Him say me didn't come home same day them let me out of the workhouse—he would have it me no come home till Thursday, but it was Wednesday, and I offer to call constable to prove it, and, at last, magistrate put an ending to it, and told massa he must accuse me wrongfully.

This was the last time they carry me before Mr. Rawlinson, and that was last January.

One Saturday afternoon, about the end of February, Philip Osborn of Knapdale came to me, and say that James Finlayson want to see me at Brown's Town that night. James Finlayson was my fellow apprentice before that time, but been buy himself free, and he was a leader in the church. He send tell me that two gentle-

men was there that want to ask how apprentice treated, and him know me been treated very badly, so him send for me.

At night I go to the chapel, and see Mr. Sturge and Mr. Harvey, and I tell them all about my bad living; Mr. Sturge tell me, me mustn't discourage, that it only to last seventeen months; I tell him, I don't know if I can live to see the seventeen months out; I was quite maugre and hungry that time, quite different to what I stand now, I hardly able to get anything to eat then, my ground all gone to pieces, the time them put in workhouse, and if my father and other people no been give me something, I would have starve. Mr. Sturge give me a shilling, and then I go back home.

On Monday night, Finlayson send for me again, I go Tuesday night, and he send me to Mr. Clarke, the minister. Him ask me if me would like to be free, I tell him, Yes, and him ask me if I would pay him back when me free? I said, Yes, I would do all in my power, and try my best endeavour to work hard and pay him back. Then Mr. Clarke tell me I must go to magistrate, to give warning to have me valued: I was quite happy and joyful, when I hear this; and on Saturday, I go to Mr. Rawlinson, at Brown's Town, and ask him to value me, but him say massa entitle to fourteen days' warning; he give me paper to serve massa, about it, and said he would very glad if I could buy myself, as he have more trouble with me and massa than any body else. I give the paper to misses, as massa was in Spanish Town, and second Saturday after, I go to Brown's Town, to be valued; but when I get there, Mr. Rawlinson tell me, as massa don't come, he couldn't value me, and all I can say no use, he keep on refuse to value me; then I go to Mr. Clarke, the minister, and he come to the Court House, and speak to Mr. Rawlinson, and at last he agree to go on with the valuation.

Him and Mr. Abraham Isaacs and Mr. Fairweather value me; Mr. Joseph Isaacs, that keep a store at Brown's Town, give evidence. He say he want a boy like me, to mind his horse, and follow him to town, and when me free, he would be willing to give me two dollars a week, and feeding and clothes besides; so them fix the price upon me for eight doubloons, ten dollars and a half, and two bitts.*

After it done, Mr. Clarke take me to his house, and give me the money, and I carry it strait to Mr. Rawlinson, and then he give me my free paper, and when I come out of the Court House, I call out quite loud, "Bless God Almighty—thank the Lord, I get out of devil's hands." Mr. Clarke, the Busha at Knapdale, was present—he look quite black at me, but him don't speak.

* That is £46. 4s. 7d. Jamaica currency, for one year and five months' service.

The ordinary wages of a good *house* domestic in Jamaica, is a dollar and a half per week, out of which the servant is allowed half a dollar for his own support. A valuation according to this standard, together with the usual deduction of one-third for contingencies, would have brought the true value of James Williams's services to about the sum of £15. for the unexpired term of the apprenticeship!

Then I go straight to Mr. Joseph Isaacs' store, and I tell him, I going to come to him on Monday, as he say him would give me two dollars a week, and feeding, and clothes; he tell me he get a boy already, but he don't get any—he only take swear he would give that, to make them put high value upon me.

Then Mr. Clarke, the minister, told me, it was Mr. Sturge that pay the money for me, and I must go to him at Spanish Town, as he want to carry me to England.

I feel so happy, I don't know what to do with myself hardly; I bless the Lord; and I bless Mr. Sturge for him goodness. If he no been take me away, I couldn't have live long.

On Tuesday I start off, and get to Spanish Town next day, after that we go to Kingston; and two weeks after, Mr. Sturge take me with him on board the ship, and we go to New York, and then sail to Liverpool, and so here I am in England.

The tale of Williams is the tale of near eight hundred thousands of our fellow-subjects, many of them professors of the Christian faith, and heirs of eternal life. He speaks but the language of his class, and details atrocities which would be multiplied a thousandfold, if his brethren were in like circumstances with himself. British Christians!—for to you we make the appeal—it is with your connivance, and will henceforth be with your sanction, that these outrages are perpetrated. Shall they be continued, or shall they cease for ever? We wait in confidence, but with thrilling interest for your reply. By your love of freedom, by your sympathy with suffering and dying humanity, by your fidelity to God, by your earnest longing for the salvation of men, by all, in a word, which can move to the discharge of duty or to the mitigation of suffering, we beseech you to be faithful to your high vocation. The friends of the negro race are about to muster on their behalf. Let them be borne onward in their righteous course, by your hearty co-operation and fervent prayers. The blessing of them who are ready to perish will then come upon you, and your name shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

Let it not be forgotten, that the people of England have paid twenty millions for the abolition of slavery, and that a large amount is still being annually drawn from the public revenue, for the support of more than one hundred stipendiary magistrates!

Yet, notwithstanding this costly—this monstrous sacrifice of

British treasure, the object for which that sacrifice was made, has never been attained—*slavery has not been abolished*—it exists with unmitigated rigour, in its most ferocious, revolting, and loathsome aspect.

Cruelties unheard of—unthought of in the worst days of slavery, are now being "heaped like burning coals" on the heads of the long suffering and patiently enduring sons and daughters of Africa.

And will the people of England look tamely on, and accede to this as the fruition of their benevolent desires? Will they calmly brook the glaring insult offered—the treacherous fraud practised, by the open and flagitious violation of a solemn compact? And will the people of England permit the deeply injured, the helpless, the unoffending negro, still to remain the victim of such accumulated misery and brutal outrage?

No! It must not be—the voice of justice, humanity, and religion, sternly demands that effectual steps be taken to secure full and immediate retribution;—we ask not the disgorgement of the misapplied twenty millions, but we demand the fulfilment of the bond—the ransom has been paid, but the captive is still retained in his galling fetters!

There is but one remedy—half measures are worse than useless—it requires but a single, brief, simultaneous, and energetic movement, and the struggle is over. Let our Anti-Slavery Societies be immediately re-organized—let the country be aroused—let the people, with one voice, instruct their representatives peremptorily to demand the instant, the unconditional, and the everlasting annihilation of the accursed system.

June 20, 1837.

D837
W724n

80-325
16 June 1980
Lawton

ADDRESS.

As this publication is intended to diffuse a knowledge of the actual condition of the negro apprentices in our colonies, with a view to the mitigation or removal of their sufferings, it is urgently entreated of the reader to turn the feeling of horror and disgust with which he must rise from the disclosures of this Narrative, into some practical efforts for the attainment of so desirable an object.

AUXILIARY SOCIETIES, MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL, or *philanthropic individuals*, may procure this tract wholesale, at the cost of paper and print by applying to the printer, J. Haddon, Castle Street, Finsbury Square.

Price 6s. per 100, or 50s. per 1000.

J. Haddon, Castle Street, Finsbury.